

## REPORT ON THE 2002 PACIFIC HALIBUT FISHERIES IN AREA 2A

The 2002 Area 2A total allowable catch (TAC) of 1,310,000 lb set by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) was allocated as sub-TACs as follows:

Treaty Indian	483,500 lb (35.0% + 25,000 lb)
Non-Treaty Total	826,500 lb (65.0% - 25,000 lb)
Non-Treaty Commercial	350,390 lb (includes incidental sablefish)
Washington Sport	214,110 lb
Oregon/California Sport	262,001 lb

The structure of each fishery and the resulting harvests are described below.

### **NON-TREATY COMMERCIAL FISHERY**

A sub-TAC of 262,001 lb (31.7% of the non-treaty share) was allocated to this fishery. The commercial fishery was divided into two components: 1) a directed longline fishery targeting on halibut south of Point Chehalis, WA; and 2) an incidental catch fishery during the salmon troll fisheries off Washington, Oregon, and California.

In 2002, the overall Area 2A TAC was high enough to allow incidental halibut retention in the primary, limited entry, fixed gear sablefish fishery. Although this is a non-treaty commercial fishery, the allocation for this fishery comes from the Washington sport fishery allocation. If the Area 2A TAC is greater than 900,000 lb, the primary sablefish fishery north of Pt. Chehalis is allocated the Washington sport allocation that is in excess of 214,110 lb, provided that at least 10,000 lb is available to the fishery. If the amount above 214,110 lb is less than 10,000 lb, then the excess is allocated to the Washington sport fisheries. The 2002 allocation to this fishery was 88,389 lb.

**Incidental halibut catch in the salmon troll fishery** A quota of 39,300 lb (15% of the non-Indian commercial fishery allocation) was allocated to the salmon troll fishery in Area 2A as an incidental catch during chinook fisheries. According to the Catch Sharing Plan, the primary management objective for this fishery is to harvest the troll quota as an incidental catch during the May/June salmon troll fishery. If any of the allocation for this fishery remains after June 30, the fishery may continue to retain incidentally caught halibut in the July through September salmon troll fisheries until the quota is taken, or until the overall non-treaty commercial catch limit is taken. The final catch ratio established pre-season by the Council at the April meeting was one halibut (minimum 32") per three chinook landed by a salmon troller, except that one halibut could be landed without meeting the ratio requirement, and no more than 35 halibut could be landed per trip.

- Halibut retention was permitted in the salmon troll fishery from May 1 through August 21, 2002. Of the halibut taken in the salmon troll fisheries 9,686 lb were landed in

Oregon and 28,281 lb were landed in Washington, for a total of 37, 967 lb (3.3% under quota.)

**Directed fishery targeting on halibut** A quota of 222,270 lb (85% of the non-treaty commercial fishery allocation) was allocated to the directed longline fishery targeting on halibut in southern Washington, Oregon, and California. The fishery was confined to the area south of Subarea 2A-1 (south of Point Chehalis, WA; 46° 53'18" N. lat.). One-day fishing periods of 10 hours in duration were scheduled by the IPHC for June 26, July 10, July 24, August 7, August 21, and September 4. A 32" minimum size limit was in effect for all openings. Vessel landing limits per fishing period based on vessel length were imposed by IPHC during all openings as shown in the following table. Vessels choosing to operate in this fishery could not land halibut in the incidental catch salmon troll fishery, nor operate in the recreational fishery.

**Fishing period limits (dressed weight, head-off in pounds) by vessel size.**

Vessel Class/Size	6/26/01 Opening	7/10/01 Opening	7/24/01 Opening
A 0 - 25 ft.	405 lb	335 lb	335 lb
B 26 - 30 ft.	505 lb	420 lb	420 lb
C 31 - 35 ft.	805 lb	670 lb	670 lb
D 36 - 40 ft.	2,220 lb	1,850 lb	1,850 lb
E 41 - 45 ft.	2,390 lb	1,990 lb	1,990 lb
F 46 - 50 ft.	2,860 lb	2,385 lb	2,385 lb
G 51 - 55 ft.	3,190 lb	2,660 lb	2,660 lb
H 56+ ft.	4,800 lb	4,000 lb	4,000 lb

- The June 26 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of about 129,000 lb, leaving 93,700 lb for later openings.
- The July 10 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of about 46,000 lb, leaving 47,700 lb for later openings.
- The July 24 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of about 48,000 lb, closing the directed commercial fishery for 2002 with an approximate 300 lb (0.13%) overage.

### **Incidental halibut catch in the primary sablefish longline fishery north of Point Chehalis**

A quota of 88,389 lb was allocated to the limited entry primary sablefish fishery in Area 2A as an incidental catch during longline sablefish operations north of Point Chehalis, WA. The primary sablefish season began on April 1, 2002, and closes October 31, 2002, although incidental halibut retention was not available until May 1. Properly licensed vessels could retain up to 150 lb of dressed weight (headed-and gutted) halibut per 1,000 lb of dressed weight sablefish, plus up to two additional halibut per fishing trip. Each vessel was allowed to retain up to a total cumulative limit of halibut that was based on the amount of primary season sablefish available to that vessel when the vessel applied for a 2002 IPHC license. Incidental halibut landings in the primary sablefish fishery through August 22, 2002 were 33,908 lb.

### **SPORT FISHERIES (Non-treaty).**

A sub-TAC of 476,111 lb (68.3% of non-treaty share) was allocated between sport fisheries in the Washington area (48.5%) and Oregon/California (51.5%). The allocations were further subdivided as quotas among seven geographic subareas as described below.

**Washington Inside Waters Subarea** (Puget Sound and Straits of Juan de Fuca). This area was allocated 57,393 lb (26.1% of the Washington sport allocation). Due to inability to monitor the catch in this area inseason, a fixed season was established preseason based on projected catch per day and number of days to achieve the sub-quota. For the first time, this subarea was divided into two regions with two seasons. The Eastern Region (East of Low Point) opened on May 9 and continued through July 12, 5 days per week (closed Tuesday and Wednesday). The Western Region opened on May 23 and continued through July 26, 5 days per week. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person. Catch totals from this sub-area are not yet available.

**Northern Washington Coastal Waters Subarea** (landings in Neah Bay and La Push). The coastal area off Cape Flattery to Queets River was allocated 108,030 lb (53.0% of the Washington sport allocation). The fishery was divided into two seasons with 38,000 lb set aside for the second season. The fishery was to open May 1 and continue 5 days per week (closed Sunday and Monday) until 70,030 lb were estimated to have been taken. The second season was to open July 1- 4, and to reopen after July 4 if quota were available. A portion of this subarea, located about 19 miles southwest of Cape Flattery, was closed to halibut fishing. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- The fishery opened May 1 and continued 5 days a week, until May 28, when 80,094 lb was estimated to have been taken. This left 27,936 lb remaining for the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend, not enough to open for the entire July 1-4 period.
- The season re-opened for July 3-4, during which 17,456 lb were taken, for a total of 97,550 lb, leaving approximately 10,480 lb in the quota.

- The halibut remaining in the quota was estimated to be enough for another day of North Coast fishing. The season re-opened on August 3, when an additional 6,873 lb was taken. The fishery was closed with 3,607 lb remaining in the quota (3.3% under quota.)

**Washington South Coast Subarea** (landings in Westport). The area from the Queets River to Leadbetter Point was allocated 42,739 lb (18.3% of the Washington sport allocation). The fishery was to open on May 1 and continue 5 days per week (closed Friday and Saturday) offshore, until the quota was taken. An inshore fishery was also to open May 1 and continue 7 days per week in waters between the Queets River and 47° 00'00" N. lat., and east of 124° 40'00" W. long. through the closure of the offshore fishery until either the subarea quota were estimated to have been taken, or until September 30, whichever occurred first. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- The 5 day per week offshore fishery and the 7 day per week inshore fishery opened on May 1 and continued until July 11, when an estimated 35,549 lb of halibut had been taken.
- To reduce incidental catch of rockfish taken in the sport halibut fisheries, particularly yelloweye rockfish, available fishing zones within the South Coast subarea were restricted to a halibut hotspot approximately 34 miles offshore of Westport, Washington, and to the nearshore area between 47° N. lat., south to 46°38'10" N. lat., and east of 124°27' W. long. Fishing in this area was restricted to 2 days per week (Friday and Saturday). Both this restricted-area fishery and the 7 day per week inshore fishery remain open as of August 21, 2002.

**Columbia River Subarea** (Leadbetter Point to Cape Falcon). This sport fishery subarea was allocated 11,188 lb, consisting of 2.7% of the Washington sport allocation plus 2.0% of the Oregon/California sport allocation. The fishery was to open May 1 and continue 7 days per week until September 30 or until the quota has been taken. The daily bag limit is the first halibut taken of 32 inches or greater in length.

- This 7 day per week fishery began on May 1 and continued through to May 25, with a total of 9,764 lb landed, 1,424 lb under quota.

**Oregon North Central and South Central Coast Subareas** (Cape Falcon to the Siuslaw River and the Siuslaw River to Humbug Mountain). These two sport fishery subareas have traditionally been managed as a single unit with separate allocations for the May all-depth fishery. The North Central Coast subarea was allocated 230,639 (88.03% of the Oregon/California sport allocation) and the South Central Subarea was allocated 18,261 lb (6.97% of the Oregon/California sport allocation).

Three seasons were set for these combined subareas: 1) a restricted depth (inside 30 fathoms) fishery to commence on May 1 and continue every day until the combined North Central and

South Central nearshore sub-quota of 19,797 lb was estimated to have been taken; 2) a fixed May season in all depths that was to open on May 10, 11, 17, and 18, with catch allocations of 156,835 lb in the North Central Subarea and 14,609 lb in the South Central Subarea, and; 3) a fixed August season in all depths from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain on August 2 and/or 3, or until the combined all-depth subquotas for Oregon south of Cape Falcon totaling 229,103 lb were estimated to have been taken. The daily bag limit was the first halibut taken of 32 inches or greater in length.

- The inside 30-fathom fishery opened on May 1 and is scheduled to close September 30. As of August 25, 2,017 lb of halibut had been taken in the inside 30-fathom fishery.
- The first fixed all-depth season in May, held May 10, 11, 17 and 18, had a total catch of 75,434 lb in the North and 8,123 in the South, which was far enough below the 156,835 lb North and 14,609 lb South quotas to allow openings on additional days during the May-June period. The all-depth season re-opened on the following pre-scheduled days: June 7, 8, 21, and 22. During these four all-depth days in June, the combined North Central and South Central fisheries took an additional 42,698 lb, leaving 45,189 lb in the May-June all-depth quota. This remaining poundage was made available to the August-September all-depth fishery.
- The August all-depth season draws on the combined quotas of the Oregon north central and south central fisheries. The initial 57,660 lb available to this fishery was supplemented by the 45,189 lb underage from the May-June all-depth fisheries. As a result of this revision, 102,849 lb was available to the August 2 and 3 all-depth fishery. In any brief fishery, weather has a significant effect on harvest rates and the weather for August 2 and 3 was poor. The combined central coast fisheries took 38,425 lb on August 2 and 3, which was far enough below the available quota amount to allow additional opening days in August and September. The all-depth season had been scheduled to re-open on August 23 and 24. On those dates, the fishery took 24,692 lb, leaving 39,732 lb remaining in the available quota. Before the season, additional potential opening dates had been scheduled for September 20 and 21. Because both the all-depth fishery and nearshore fishery were well under their respective quotas, ODFW, NMFS and IPHC decided to provide further opening dates. The final all-depth halibut season off central Oregon is scheduled for September 20-21 and the agencies agreed that sufficient halibut remained to also open on September 18-19. NMFS expects to finalize this recommendation through a Federal Register publication in mid-September.

**South of Humbug Mountain, Oregon and off the California Coast Subarea** This sport fishery was allocated 6,809 lb (3.0% of the Oregon/California quota). This area had a pre-set season of 7 days per week from May 1 to September 30 and a bag limit of the first halibut taken of 32 inches or greater in length.

- This season is scheduled to remain open through September 30. No catch estimates are available for this fishery, but it is very unlikely that this subarea quota will be taken.

**TRIBAL FISHERIES**

A sub-TAC of 483,500 lb (35% + 25,000 lb of the Area 2A TAC) was allocated to Tribal fisheries. The tribes estimated that 16,000 lb would be used for ceremonial and subsistence (C&S) fisheries and the remaining 467,500 lb was allocated to the commercial fishery. The tribal commercial fishery was scheduled to open on March 18, 2002 pursuant to regulations adopted by the IPHC and continue until the tribal commercial subquota was reached. The tribal C&S fishery was scheduled to run throughout the year.

The tribal commercial halibut allocation is divided so that approximately 80-85% of the allocation is taken in brief, open competition derbies, in which vessels from all halibut tribes compete against each other for landings. In addition to these unrestricted openings, 15-20% of the commercial allocation is reserved for “restricted” fisheries, in which participating vessels from all halibut tribes are restricted to a per vessel and per day poundage limit for halibut (500 lb per vessel/day for 2002 restricted fisheries.)

Fishery	Dates Held	Pounds Landed	# of Landings
Unrestricted, 48-hour	March 18-20	80,867 lb	33 landings
Restricted, 500 lb/vessel/day	March 20 - April 19	69,105 lb	196 landings
Unrestricted, 24-hour	April 2	106,064 lb	34 landings
Restricted, 500 lb/vessel/day	May 5-9	11,746 lb	33 landings
Unrestricted, 36-hour	April 30	202,862 lb	41 landings
Total		470,644 lb	337 landings

The C&S fishery will continue through December 31 and tribal estimates of catch will be reported by the tribes in January 2003.

2002 Area 2A TAC and Catch (in pounds)				
	Quota	Inseason Revised Quota	Catch	Over/Under
TREATY INDIAN	483,500			
Commercial	467,500		470,644	0.7%
Ceremonial & Subsistence	16,000		(Ongoing)	
NON-TREATY	826,500			
COMMERCIAL	350,389			
Troll	39,300		37,967	-3.3%
Directed	222,700		223,000	0.1%
Sablefish Incidental	88,389		(Ongoing)	
SPORT	476,111			
WA Sport	214,110			
OR/CA Sport	262,001			
WA Inside Waters	57,393		(Estimates not yet available)	
WA North Coast	108,030		104,423	-3.3%
WA South Coast	42,739		(Ongoing)	
Col River Area	11,188		9,764	-12.7%
OR Central Coast	248,901			
Inside 30 fathoms (all areas)	19,797	4,797	(Ongoing)	
May (North Central Coast)	156,835	113,851	113,851 ★	0.0%
May (South Central Coast)	14,609	12,674	12,674 ★	0.0%
August/September (all areas)	57,660	117,849	(Ongoing)	
OR S. of Humbug/CA	7,860		(Ongoing)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,310,000</b>			

★ Although the initial allocation to the August all-depth fisheries was 57,660, the quota was augmented by the underage from the May all-depth fisheries, resulting in 45,189 lb being added to the August all-depth. In accordance with the Catch Sharing plan, an additional 15,000 lb were transferred from the inside-30-fathom fishery to the August all-depth fishery, making the total quota available in August-September 117,849 lb.

